

Willis Is the Enemy of Workmen's Compensation

Commissioner Thomas J. Duffy Tells the International Association of Accident Boards Last Week at Columbus.

Columbus, Ohio—How the Ohio Industrial Commission has been fighting political influence in the administration of the workmen's compensation system was told by Commissioner Thomas J. Duffy in speaking at the closing session of the International Association of Accident Boards and Commissions. His theme was the experience of the Buckeye State with the State insurance plan, and his conclusion was that from every standpoint the plan is the best and that the private insurance interest must be eliminated from the compensation field.

Asserting that it had been found difficult to administer the system without constant subjection "to political influences as would destroy efficiency and jeopardize the solvency of the fund," Mr. Duffy said: "We had succeeded very well in convincing employers that political influences did not interfere with our work until the Governor, for political reasons, requested the members of the Industrial Commission to resign, and later in the year, removed, for political reasons, many of the employees of the Industrial Commission. This greatly shook the confidence of the employers, and, while it made our task more difficult, yet we were able to avoid any serious injury to the State insurance fund."

Criticizes Governor Willis.

Duffy, in his address on "Ohio's Experience with Workmen's Compensation," criticized Governor Willis, who, he charged, has demanded the resignations of State Industrial Commissioners appointed by former Governor Cox, and had later removed many of the commission's best employees "for political reasons."

"The great humanitarian work of administering workmen's compensation should be kept out of politics," Duffy asserted.

The compensation system, administered by the State, he said, has for its principal objective the elimination of "waste," a term, which in Mr. Duffy's judgment includes attorneys' fees and all other needless charges in industrial accidents. Under the State insurance plan, he argued, there is no reason why a man who has lost one eye can not secure employment, whereas if the employer carries his own risk or insures with an insurance company, there will be an incentive for denying him work.

Nearly 1,200,000 workers in Ohio are protected under terms of Ohio's compulsory workmen's compensation act, in effect since January 1, 1914.

Employers Take to Plan.

On April 1, 1916, nearly 10,000 Ohio employers were subscribers to the State workmen's compensation fund as compared with 3,938 employers who were in the State fund when the compulsory law became effective.

The actual cash balance in the State fund for payment to injured workmen and dependents of killed employees was \$3,628,045 on April 1.

Premium rates charged Ohio employers in the fund are \$1 compared with \$2.55 charged by competing liability insurance companies in Ohio.

Mr. Duffy said that the fight of the insurance companies had been of real benefit, for it had disclosed the weaknesses of the State plan and had enabled the board to find remedies.

CARS AGAIN ARE RUNNING

In Pittsburgh—Men Ratify Agreement Made at Midnight Confab.

Pittsburgh, Pa., May 2.—Thirty-two hundred motormen and conductors of the Pittsburgh Railways Company this afternoon ratified a wage agreement recommended by their leaders after conferences last night with officers of the company and business men.

Half an hour afterward the first car had left the barn nearest the Labor Temple, where the ratification meeting was held, and tonight the service suspended last Sunday at midnight had become normal. The first cars were cheered as they passed through the downtown streets.

The new wage agreement, which is to run for two years, provided payment for motormen and conductors as follows: First six months, 27 cents an hour; second six months, 29 cents; second year, 31 cents; third year, 33 cents; fourth year, 34 cents, and after the fourth year, 35 cents. The rate for the Beaver Valley and Washington County lines is one cent an hour less.

Some \$450,000 is added to the company's annual pay roll.

PRISON SCANDAL REVIVED.

Little Rock, Ark.—A short time ago it was charged that convicts in this State were treated in an inhuman manner. A committee was appointed to investigate, but the claims were found not true. Right-thinking citizens, however, declared the committee's report was a "white-wash," and continued the agitation. As a result Governor Hays made a personal investigation, and later asked for the resignations of two members of the penitentiary board. This was refused and the State executive has brought charges against them. The trial is now in progress. One convict acknowledged he committed perjury when questioned by the former investigating committee. When asked why he did so, he replied: "Well, if you lawyers knew that a 200-pound man with a six-foot lash was waiting to whip you if you did not testify as you were ordered, you would have committed perjury, too."

UNIONS ARE NECESSARY.

Greenville, S. C.—"We told you so," says Editor Peden of the Home Circle, in commenting on the announcement by the Textile Manufacturers' association that it will test the new law relating to docking employees in cotton mills.

"Millions of dollars have been stolen from the cotton mills operatives through graft and robbery of docking," continues the Home Circle, which again gives this advice to workers:

"If we had a well regulated labor union that alone would be the best law we could have—it would better regulate matters."

WAGE DEMANDS EXORBITANT

Say Employers, Who Shut Up Shop Rather Than Grant Them.

Alliance, Ohio.—Because the company thought wage demands were exorbitant and the men insisted upon increases, the metal stamping department of the Transue-Williams Company's plant was closed down here May 2 and 50 machinists were made idle. The men asked for an increase of 20 per cent. They have been working eight hours and received an increase of 20 per cent last fall.

The heaters made a demand for an increase and the matter was to be taken up at a conference May 3. The other departments of the big plant, which employs almost 1,400 men, are running. The Buckeye twist drill machinists also made a wage demand, asking for a 30 per cent increase, which the company refused. The plant was closed down Tuesday afternoon.

Demanding \$3.50 a day for eight hours, instead of \$3.25 for nine hours, as they are now getting, 75 packers in four potteries at Sebring struck May 2. The employers declare the men are duly bound by contract to work for \$3.25 and that the contract runs until October.

SILVER WORKERS STAND FIRM.

Meriden, Conn.—Employees of the International Silver company are entering on the eighth month of their strike to enforce shorter hours and higher wages. Heretofore every attempt to organize the silver trust's factories has been fought with the blacklist, but on October 4 last nearly 6,000 men and women employed in the company's plants in this city and vicinity suspended work. They are demanding a shorter workday, adequate wages and redress of grievances. With the opening of spring the strikers are more determined than ever, and it is hinted that some members of the company's board of directors are beginning to believe the strikers mean what they say—that betterments must be guaranteed before they return to work. The strikers are calling attention to advertisements in eastern newspapers in which the trust offers for sale second, or mis-stamped work; spoons, forks, knives, ladles and all kinds of flat ware. This indicates that there are many incompetents among the trust's "free and independents."

WATCH THE CHILD LABOR BILL.

Washington.—Although the senate committee has made a favorable report on the Keating-Owen child labor bill, which has been passed by the house, the foes of this legislation will take advantage of every parliamentary situation to block final consideration.

If this bill becomes a law the products of child labor will be barred from interstate commerce, and trade unionists and other opponents of child labor are urged to write their senators and insist on an early vote on the Keating-Owen bill.

Crisis in Labor Situation

Unrest Is Greater Than In Previous Years Due to General Demands For Eight-Hour Day.—Employers Are Organizing to Fight Closed Shop Idea, On Eve of Walkout By Workmen.

(By Frank Morrison.)

Washington.—Secretary Frank Morrison, of the American Federation of Labor, in a May Day review of the labor situation throughout the country declared that there was greater industrial unrest than has prevailed for several years and that it would be impossible to intimate the number of workers who would be on strike May 1, most of them for a shorter work day.

"There is a greater unrest on this May 1 than has been manifest in many previous years," said he. "To some this condition is alarming. To me it is encouraging, for I believe discontent is a sign of life—of progress. Workers are demanding an eight-hour day, and I venture the opinion that most of the large strikes today, either now or prospective, are because of this shorter work day demand."

"It is impossible to estimate the number of workers that will be on strike May 1, for the reason that discontent can not be tabulated or placed in statistical form."

"A factor in developing present conditions is the decreased number of aliens who have come to our shores since the European war. This has weakened the policy of many employers in trusted

industries, who have maintained unemployed armies at their factory gates to menace those employees who would better their own conditions. A considerable percentage of the unemployed have secured employment as a result, although the unemployed question still is acute among those employers who are determined to pay less than a living wage and who ignore present-day living standards.

"I have just returned from Pittsburgh, where the manufacturers have combined and published an advertisement in which they state that 'after due consideration that they will not reduce working hours in their respective shops.' This includes the Westinghouse Company, whose employees are on strike for an eight-hour day."

"In Youngstown, Ohio, the manufacturers have joined together and in a page advertisement stated that they would not concede improved conditions, and have agreed to close down their establishments with the understanding that their employees must make application individually for re-employment."

"It is worth noting that large numbers of strikes are now being waged by unorganized workers, who later joined the trade union movement when they realize the necessity for organization, discipline and intelligent action."

DETAILS OF SETTLEMENT

Announced at New York By Anthracite Operators and Miners.

New York.—Details of the settlement of the anthracite coal controversy, as a result of the negotiations which have been going on for weeks between operators and the miners, were made public here today by the operators. The agreement, involving increased wages, shorter hours and virtual recognition of the union, is as yet unsigned, but since it has met with the approval of the subcommittees which have been in session here, it is not anticipated that it will be rejected at the miners' convention at Pottsville, Penn., May 2.

The agreement will be retroactive to April 1 and will avert a threatened strike which would throw some 176,000 employees into idleness.

The agreement contains no mention of the closed shop or of the check-off system, which have been points of dispute during the negotiations. Regarding the former, however, it was pointed out by the operators, the agreement will, when approved by the convention, be signed by John P. White, President of the United Mine Workers of America, and by others officials of the union, and that this is in effect recognition of the union, giving the miners the right to organize in order to better their conditions. As for the check-off system, the operators have contended all along that it would be un-American and detrimental to their interests to constitute themselves as collecting agents for the union, and this point the miners waived.

The agreement contains a provision that neither side shall initiate or encourage legislation which would in any way effect the obligations of the new contract or impair any of its provisions, which are to be continued until May 20, 1920.

Contract rates for each colliery are increased 7 per cent over and above those effected in April, 1912, and the working day established by the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission is reduced from 9 to 8 hours. Employees who are paid by the day or hour shall, except in certain circumstances, be paid for an eight-hour day at the rate established for nine hours under the expiring agreement, this payment being subject to an increase of 3 per cent.

NEW CONTRACT

Drafted By Green Line Employees To Be Presented To Company.

Members of the Street Car Men's Union in the employ of the South Covington and Cincinnati Street Railway Company were in session early this morning at K. of P. Hall, Covington, Ky., for the purpose of ratifying a proposed new agreement to be presented to the company. The proposal was framed by the union's Contract Committee.

The three-year agreement the men now are working under provides that any demands to be made upon the company must be presented sixty days before the expiration of the old agreement. The old agreement expires August 2.

In the proposal, it is said, the men are requesting an increased wage.

GARMENT WORKERS STRIKE.

Thirty women garment workers, affiliated with the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, went on a strike last Monday. They were employed on Elm street.



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